

SICC MEETING MINUTES

Truman Building, Room 400

September 14, 2007

Members Present

Joyce Jackman
Lisa Robbins
Senator Scott Rupp

Wendy Witcig
Kathy Fuger
Joyce Sims

Kathryn Sapp
Carrisa Mattern
Leslie Elpers

Members Not Present

Michael Dittmore
Glenda Miller
Dr. Patsy Carter

Doug Ommen
Kim Oligschlaeger
Pamela Speer

Stacey Owsley

DESE Staff Present

CJ Hubbard
Judy Goans

Dale Carlson

Bill Connelly

To review copies of handouts referenced in the minutes below, go to the following website:
<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/SICCpage.html> and click on "Handouts" for the
September 14, 2007 meeting.

Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions – Lisa Robbins called the meeting to order at 8:45. Introductions were made including the introduction of the newest SICC member, Joyce Sims, who will be filling a provider vacancy on the SICC. Joyce introduced herself and gave the SICC members a brief description of her education and work background.

Approval of the SICC Minutes - Lisa Robbins asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the July SICC meeting, with corrections. Kathy Fuger made a motion and Joyce Jackman seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Financial Reports - Dale Carlson reported that due to it being early in the fiscal year there is not a lot to report on regarding the budget. First Steps is starting off the year solid financially and DESE expects that to continue. Dale indicated that at the bottom of the "A" report he has added the historical information that the SICC requested. There were no outstanding receipts or expenditures for July or August.

The "B" report shows a slightly higher cost per child and child count for August. Dale stated that he also added a line to this report showing the FY07 totals by month for direct service expenditures to compare throughout this fiscal year. A member of the council asked Dale if the "B" report reflects the provider rate increase. Dale responded that increased provider rates will not be implemented until late October. Increased provider rates should begin to be reflected on the November SICC budget reports.

Data Report – Bill Connelly presented a PowerPoint presentation with preliminary 2006-07 Part C SPP/APR Data. The SICC had requested at the January 2007 meeting that DESE provide them with preliminary data this year. Bill explained the meaning of each Indicator and the data included in each Indicator. A member of the SICC requested a handout of the scale used in Indicator 3 (Early Childhood Outcomes). A member of the council also suggested that the wording of the questions be looked at in Indicator 4 (Family Survey). Bill stated that the wording of some of the questions in the Family Survey has been changed with the help of the Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis (OSED) at the University of Missouri. Bill reiterated that this is preliminary data but DESE feels that it is fairly close to what we will see when the official SPP/APR data is presented for the SICC to review and respond to in January 2008. DESE also plans to draft an SPP/APR document with finalized data that they will make available at the November meeting. At the January SICC meeting, DESE will incorporate any input that the SICC would like to include so that the information will be ready to submit by February 1.

Compliance Update – CJ Hubbard distributed a written report on child complaint activity that she had previously reported on verbally at the SICC meeting in July. CJ also reported that there are now several different foreign languages available for Parental Rights and Notices of Action on the DESE website. First Steps parents who speak a language other than English and require someone to interpret for them must have these documents available in their native language.

CJ announced that DESE will conduct compliance monitoring for SPOE Regions 1, 2, 3, 6 and 9 beginning in October. CJ explained that the Eligibility Criteria, previously known as Document G-17, has been incorporated into the standards and indicators document. A memo was sent to all SPOE Directors and DMH offices asking for their feedback on this matter. The September 13 letter explained to the SPOE offices that the draft standards and indicators will be finalized before the first monitoring in October. DESE should be able to give a preliminary report to the SICC in November on the monitoring.

DESE Update – Joyce Jackman stated that the biggest update news was the substantial provider rate increase. DESE has seen a definite increase in the number of people taking the Module 1 training since the provider increase was announced which is good news. Joyce also received feedback from across the state indicating interest from providers wanting to return as providers in First Steps. Over the last several years DESE has taken steps to gain a stronger financial base for the program and because of that base DESE was extremely pleased to announce the rate increase.

DESE received an extension on the grant money received from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) for professional development. This money was used previously for the Robin McWilliam training. DESE would like to use the additional money to target some hands on regional training and possibly see if Dr. McWilliam, or some of his graduate students, could come and assist with the training. DESE would like to see this training done in targeted regions of the state with people interested in building on the team concept.

DESE has 5 SPOE region contractors who have presented pilot proposals for consideration. Not all ten regions are looking into a pilot project but all regions are looking at new and innovative ways for delivery of services. DESE realizes that we won't be able to replicate the same program in all areas of the state but we also don't want to put a lot of money behind a pilot that we won't be able to replicate anywhere else in the state. The long term goal would be to do these pilots between now and the next Request for Proposal (RFP) for the SPOE regions to see what we could build into the next RFP. The next SPOE RFP Phase 1 is up in 2009 and Phase 2 is up in 2010. DESE may also want to look at that a little bit differently because it would be best to re-bid the whole state in the same year, especially if we have to realign the regions. A member of the

council asked if we have any regulatory challenges with official IFSP pilot programs. Joyce said that as long as the process stays as outlined in the Federal Regulations it is fine. The biggest change is likely to be that the service matrix may change slightly because the SPOE may enter into individual agreements with providers. Region 3 is looking into an agreement with a local hospital and with a couple of special instructors. This team of Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Speech Therapist and Special Instructor would be the core providers of services. The hospital won't necessarily enroll as a provider with the CFO. The SPOE provider designation would give the structure for the RFP contractor to sub-contract, or employ providers, as needed. Most of the areas that we are looking at undertaking a pilot project have a limited number of providers so the parents don't have a large selection to choose from in their area. It was a Missouri initiative for the parents to have a choice in their provider. Joyce stated that she hopes to have more updates by the November SICC meeting.

Joyce stated that she attended the Part C Coordinator meeting in Baltimore at the end of August sponsored by OSEP. She indicated that there was a great deal of discussion about the APR/SPP. The final regulations were mentioned, and OSEP indicated, that they won't be out in time for states to make changes to their state plan prior to the state's application for funding in April 2008.

Membership – Joyce Jackman stated that DESE did receive an official resignation from Elizabeth Spaugh as she has decided to focus more on programs for older children. Joyce Sims replaced Val Lane so we do have all the provider positions filled for the council. The council also has someone from each state agency and their designated representative on the council. The current vacancies are in parent membership with 3 open positions. This also leaves an opening for a co-chair. We have 2 names at the governor's office that are being processed by the Boards and Commissions. Senator Rupp was asked if he might be able to help expedite these appointments. Senator Rupp agreed to see if he could help with the situation. We will another parent nominee. In regards to a co-chairperson, Carissa Mattern shared her concerns with accepting this position due to her busy schedule. It was suggested by a member of the council that a subcommittee of the SICC be formed to meet and see what can be done about the situation in the interim. If we do get the new parent members appointed they will still be walking into the council cold. The executive committee is usually the 2 co-chairs and the past 2 co-chairs, but currently that would only leave Lisa Robbins. Joyce made a motion to form a subcommittee from the SICC members to look into the membership problem on the council and to make recommendations to the council for alternatives for a temporary fix until we are fully staffed. Kathy Fuger seconded the motion. Motion passed. Kathryn Sapp, Kathy Fuger, Lisa Robbins and Joyce Jackman agreed to be on a sub-committee that would work on a proposal to the SICC as to how we should handle the current membership situation. Joyce Jackman also said that the council can utilize the OSEP Regional Center for training of new members to advisory panels.

A member asked if DESE would be decreasing the provider rates in the future. Joyce stated that DESE has no intention of taking away the new provider rates. She said that the First Steps program is currently on sound financial footing, especially with Senate Bill 500 providing for family cost participation and insurance money. As the program grows DESE will probably have to ask for an increase in appropriations but we will be able to go to the legislature and show them growth in the program. The Central Finance Office (CFO) informed DESE that on September 25 they will pay 93% of the provider claims under the new rate. The CFO has been testing the rate programs and will have the new rates into their system by 5:30 on September 25. The CFO will post a notice to providers on the Missouri First Steps website with this information and when they can begin submitting claims. The rest of the procedures, which is about 7%, won't be ready until October 30. After October 30, all the new rates will be changed. This doesn't change Medicaid

or what we can claim for Medicaid so the program is absorbing this cost of the rate increase. It also doesn't change what we can bill private insurance which again is the Medicaid rate.

SPOE Operations

- ◆ Niki Clover reported for SPOE Region 6 and stated that they have been fully staffed since January, which has made a big difference this year. Their office is still having difficulty in reaching the 60/40 split with DMH because DMH has had problems with their service coordinators and their caseloads. They have been working very hard on provider recruitment and Leslie Elpers has been doing a lot to help. Niki stated that she and Pam Thomas have been meeting with providers to solve some of their problems.
- ◆ Loletta Combs reported for SPOE Region 9 and stated that Debbie Brewer had resigned so they will be working on filling her vacant position. They now have 2 new teams that have been successfully starting to provide assessments.
- ◆ Margaret Pickett reported for SPOE Region 1 and said that they are preparing for their contract audit and they currently have a quality indicator scale review. Their RICC has been working on finding a Child Find Coordinator to fulfill Senate Bill 112. They are working on staff recruitment and training and are in the process of hiring again.
- ◆ Kathy Daulton reported for SPOE Region 4 and said they are preparing for the contract audit and also going through QIRS. Their SB40 boards have been working with the SPOE office on child find. Their office has experienced very little staff turnover.
- ◆ Julia Hillyer reported for the St. Louis County SPOE and said they are getting ready for their contract audit and QIRS review. They have also been focusing on child find and recruiting activities. Their office has not been experiencing any staff turnover.
- ◆ Karen Jacobi reported that SPOE 3 has been working on provider recruitment. They now have a hospital in the northwest section of their region that is providing services for their area. Their RICC has great participation and has been meeting quarterly. They are preparing for a health fair in a predominately Spanish part of their community and hope that this will help spread the word about First Steps in this area. Karen has been working with Pam Thomas to build camaraderie among providers.
- ◆ Jan Robinson reported that SPOE 5 is fully staffed again but they are still struggling with staying fully staffed. Their office is working with Michele Schall to pull together the teaming ideal.
- ◆ Cassie Panton reported for SPOE 10 that they have providers who are now traveling further because of the rate increase. They are working on child find and Charla Myers is helping them with QIRS training.
- ◆ Diana Patten reported that SPOE 8 has had no staff turnover, which has helped. Their office has excellent evaluation and assessment teams who evaluate in a timely manner. They also have a new display board to share with the community that looks more professional at community health fairs. They are excited to be working on a pilot proposal which incorporates ideals from the Robin McWilliam training. Many of their providers did not attend the Robin McWilliam training and they are trying to share those ideals with those providers. Both of their RICC co-chairs have resigned so Stacey Ismail is helping to pull that back together.

RICC reports

- ◆ Region 1 RICC reported that they have an opening for 1 parent member. Their meetings have been well attended and they always have a quorum present. Their RICC was involved in several activities within the region to spread the news about the First Steps

program. Their child find committee is collecting photos of First Steps children and their families for a DVD that they will use for informational purposes. They are also working on ways to reach more people in a position to make referrals to the First Steps program.

- ◆ Region 2 RICC reported that they are still looking for one parent and a member of the medical profession for their council. The RICC participated in various child find activities in the month of August. A mailing was sent to the area legislators updating them on the First Steps program and the importance of First Steps.
- ◆ Region 3 RICC reported that they are in need of 2 representatives from the medical field and 3 parent members for their council. The RICC has focused their efforts on Provider Recruitment in the areas of their regions with a child count of 0. The RICC discussed putting together a PowerPoint presentation to use when making First Steps presentations. Recruitment letters have been mailed to OT, PT and SLP providers in the Boone county area in hopes of attracting more providers.
- ◆ Region 9 RICC reported that their region has been divided into 3 sub-regions due to its large size. The sub-regions will meet and report back to the quarterly RICC meeting. The RICC has appointed more members to their recruitment committee.

Member issues – A member asked how providers can obtain a copy of the Robin McWilliam DVD set. Leslie Elpers asked if agencies could receive a copy of the DVD also. Joyce stated that the area directors will have a copy and the SPOE offices will also have copies of the DVD. DESE also plans to hold additional regional training.

The no provider available list is five month old and a member asked how they can obtain an updated list. Bill Connelly said that DESE is hoping to start updating it monthly.

The group discussed the problem that providers are having regarding being able to see the past history of a First Steps child. Joyce stated that this is a problem with the webspoe that limits a provider's ability to go back into the child's history. Some felt that it could be painful for a parent to have to go back and recall their child's past history. DESE said that they recognize that the current system is somewhat fragmented with little connection between providers. Working in teams provides easier access to the information. This might be something that the area directors could look into to find a way to streamline the process. Joyce stated that if we begin using the teaming concept this will happen automatically. For now, if providers must know the physical or medical history they will need to ask the family. Joyce said that the providers should use good professional judgment on what past information they need to obtain.

A member asked if Joyce had received any additional information on a standardized tool for the evaluation process. Joyce did contact the Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC) to receive a sample test kit which DESE should be receiving shortly. Joyce and the area directors will examine the sample kit to determine if it would be useful for our state. Joyce also found that there are a number of states using a standardized tool, other than DAYC, for evaluation so she will also be looking into other options. DESE feels that if it has a sound basis then we ought to move forward with a consistent tool. Some states reported that they had problems meeting timelines using these tools. Joyce will check with these states to see what problems they encountered.

The council discussed the need for parent nominations from the field to the SICC. It was suggested that parents who were just completing First Steps may be more qualified to be members of the SICC due to them having a better understanding of the First Steps system. It was suggested that each RICC keep a roster of available parents. Joyce stated that nominations to the SICC do come from the field. It was suggested by a member of the council that perhaps we need

a parent feedback section on the SICC agenda or some way to receive better parent feedback. Joyce stated that parent members of the SICC can be reimbursed for child care while they are attending SICC meetings.

Old Business:

Phillips and Associates – Joyce presented the PowerPoint presentation from Philips and Associates and answered questions regarding the presentation from the council.

Student Loan Forgiveness Information Update – Jenn Coleman presented information that her group has gathered regarding student loan forgiveness. Jenn asked anyone who would like to help with this project to let her know. Margaret Pickett and Stacey Ismail have been helping Jenn with this project. Many different disciplines such as nurses, psychologist and early childhood educators currently have student loan forgiveness. Jenn said it was suggested to her that her group focus on one discipline at a time rather than working on all of them at once. It was also suggested that perhaps Senator Rupp might be able to help with this project.

Mary Beth Luna is still working for the governor's office as a liaison with DESE but she is now working out of the governor's St. Louis office. DESE has a new liaison in the Jefferson City governor's office, Hillary Elliott.

Lisa Robbins has the information on the scholarship from the University of Missouri for a Masters degree in Special Education for anyone who is interested.

New Business – Vince Forcier from Covansys stated that his company offers an on-line survey site that the RICCs could use to obtain information from providers. The RICC would be responsible for creative content and then the CFO could send it out to all our providers. This could be a possible pilot program through the CFO.

Leslie Elpers made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joyce Sims seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 1:40.